U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Agriculture Fact Sheet

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Threats to the U.S. Agriculture Industry

- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), agriculture contributes over 19 million jobs in the U.S. with more than $1 trillion in annual economic activity (USDA Economic Research Service, 2020).
- The greatest risks to the success of this industry are exotic pests and foreign animal diseases. Invasive species have caused $138 billion annually in economic and environmental losses in the U.S., including yield and quality losses for America's agriculture industry (Pimentel et al., 2000).
- Each day, CBP helps to prevent the intentional and unintentional introduction of potentially harmful plant pests and foreign animal diseases into the U.S. at more than 300 ports of entry.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Agriculture Statistics

Passenger Inspections 1,758,971

Cargo Inspections 939,654

Quarantine Material Interceptions (QMI)
- Animal Products..... 294,230
- Plant Materials/Soil..... 593,525
- Miscellaneous 80,222
- Total QMI 967,977

Pest Interceptions
- Submitted 92,089
- Quarantine Significant..... 41,146

Total Passenger Penalties 6,579

Workforce and Career Enhancement

Today, CBP deploys more than 2,600 agriculture specialists to over 180 ports of entry.

Training

CBP and the USDA's, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have continued to develop and use pest-detection training modules to strengthen inspection efforts since 2004.

These include modules on the Flighted Spongy Moth Complex (*Lymantria* moths), Khapra beetle (*Trogoderma granarium*), Asian citrus psyllid (*Diaphorina citri*), citrus greening disease (Huanglongbing), and wood packaging materials (WPM).

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Pest Exclusion & Agriculture Safeguarding

In addition to exclusionary and safeguarding practices at the ports of entry, agriculture specialists engage in extensive outreach with social media, speaking engagements, and digital signage aimed at informing the traveling public of the negative environmental and economic impacts that foreign pests and animal diseases, such as African swine fever, may have if introduced into our nation.

WPM, typically used for transport, is a high-risk source of tree pests. Pests like the Asian Longhorned Beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer were introduced to the U.S. with WPM. To minimize the risks, regulations require WPM to be heat treated or fumigated as per International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15 and be marked with valid markings. Non-compliant WPM is denied entry into the U.S.

Contaminants like soil, manure, seeds, and plant/ animal material may harbor invasive pests and diseases. Eliminating contaminants in conveyances and cargo prior to their shipment will result in fewer holds, delays, and commodity returns or treatments.

The Khapra beetle is one of the world's most destructive stored-product pests. It feeds on a variety of dried materials, is resistant to insecticides, and can go long periods without food, with a larva being able to survive dormant for up to two years.

Khapra beetles are not known to occur in the U.S. and its introduction into the U.S. could have serious consequences and economic impact. The average Khapra beetle interceptions for CBP between FY 2018 and FY 2022 were approximately 161 pests per year.

Agriculture Canine

In 2003, approximately 75 canine teams were included when the Homeland Security Act transferred the agriculture inspection function from USDA to CBP. Today, the CBP agriculture canine program is growing to approximately 160 detector dog teams, providing screening at border crossings, preclearance locations, air passenger terminals, cruise terminals, cargo warehouses, and mail facilities that process international passengers and merchandise. CBP's agriculture canine teams initially train at the USDA's National Detector Dog Training Center. After training, the canine teams are deployed to the field where they protect U.S. agriculture by recognizing fruits, vegetables, meats, and soil that are hosts for invasive pests and diseases.